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To: LABTestimony
Subject: HB 5389

Written Testimony Supporting House Bill 5389: An Act Concerning Collateral Consequences of a Criminal Record

Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Ranking Members Miner and Polletta, and distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Andrew Osmun, a resident of New Haven, and I write in support of HB 5389.

When my son was released from prison and came from another state to live with us, he sought to enroll in a program at Norwalk Community College. He was initially blocked until he persevered in asserting his legal right to attend. Because of housing discrimination he has been living with us since his release. Not only is there discrimination based on a felony conviction, his particular class of felony, for an offense of a sexual nature (online) makes him subject to even greater discrimination in employment, housing and education.

If this statement is true:

“The General Assembly finds that the public is best protected when persons who have been arrested or convicted of crimes are rehabilitated and returned to society prepared to take their places as productive citizens and that the ability of such persons to find meaningful employment, housing and higher education and to freely access public accommodations, credit and insurance products, is directly related to their normal functioning in the community.”

then it is imperative that the committee support this bill to open doors to all returning and returned citizens with a criminal record.

Thank you for the good work of the Council on the Collateral Consequences of a Criminal Record and this Committee for raising this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to write in support of this bill.

Andrew Osmun, Member, Center for Rational Justice Studies